

REMARKS

Specification

In the Office Action dated July 5, 2005, the Examiner objected to the abstract for exceeding the 150 word limitation for abstracts. Applicant has requested deletion of the objectionable abstract and substitution of the above-presented abstract. Additionally, Applicant has provided a marked-up version of the objectionable abstract indicating the changes resulting in the replacement abstract. Applicant requests acceptance of the replacement abstract and the withdrawal of the previously presented objection.

Claims

In the Office Action dated July 5, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 11-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Dejaeger et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,213,395). In the action, the Examiner asserted that Dejaeger taught that the processing unit 78b of convertible checkout station received a signal from interface unit 142 regarding the self-checkout mode and a signal from the personal interface terminal 76 regarding the assistant mode. The Examiner then argued, as Applicant understands the Office Action, that these units were generating a signal corresponding to the physical configuration of the checkout station and that the processing unit was operating the station in a mode consistent with that configuration.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with Examiner's reading of the Dejaeger reference. The configuration signal in the Dejaeger reference is generated by the supervisor switch 106, not the interface unit 142 or the personal interface terminal 76. See, Dejaeger, Col. 32, lines 8-24; Col. 41, lines 9-23; and Col. 54, lines 12-27. The supervisor switch 106 generates the configuration signal in response to the operator

setting the supervisor switch to a position that corresponds to the physical configuration of the checkout station. Thus, the Dejaeger reference teaches that the operator is the one who recognizes the physical configuration of the checkout station and sets the supervisor switch to the corresponding position. The processing unit then operates the station with reference to the signal received from the supervisor switch.

Applicant has amended the independent claims 11 and 17 to clarify the statement of Applicant's invention, namely, that the configuration signal is not generated by an operator manipulated switch. Instead, the configuration signal is generated in response relative movement between two components of the convertible checkout station. The processor then responds to the generated signal and operates the checkout station in the self-checkout or assisted checkout mode.

The Dejaeger reference does not teach nor does it suggest a switch that detects relative movement of two convertible checkout station components and determines a software configuration for the checkout station that corresponds to the detected positions of the components. As set forth in the amended claims 11 and 17, Applicant's claimed invention determines the software configuration for the checkout station from a signal generated in correspondence with the detected positions of the checkout station components. Therefore, claims 11 and 17 are allowable over the references of record.

Claims 12 and 13 are allowable because none of the references of record disclose the loading and executing of software modules in accordance with a signal generated with reference to the detected position of checkout station components without operator intervention. Therefore, claims 12 and 13 should be allowed.

Claims 14 and 19-20 further refine the claimed invention by requiring that the execution of the software be interrupted upon detection of a change in the position of the two checkout station components. The device of Dejaeger cannot perform this action, but instead must rely on the operator to detect the change in checkout station component positioning and then manipulate a switch to inform the processor of the configuration change. Claims 15 and 16 further require the loading of software modules and the execution of the software in response to the detected change in physical configuration of the checkout station. Again, Dejaeger is not able to make any change in the operation of the checkout station unless an operator changes the state of the supervisor switch 106.

New claims 21-31 are provided to more particularly set forth the detection of the position of the checkout station components and the generation of the signal indicative of the physical configuration of the checkout station. These particulars include the station components that may be moved to detect a physical configuration change of a checkout station (claims 22-23) as well as different ways in which the spatial relationship between checkout station components may be detected (claims 24-31).

Conclusion

After entry of the above-presented amendments and acceptance of the new claims, all pending claims are patentable over the references of record. Reexamination and allowance of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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